

Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PBOR, MOPS, PORG, OAU, ET, SO
SUBJECT: OUTLINE OF POSSIBLE BASIS FOR SETTLEMENT IN OGADEN

REF: STATE 37063

1. I MET WITH MINSTATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS FRANCIS DENG THIS MORNING, FEBRUARY 15. I GAVE HIM COPY OF SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENTS ON HORN OF AFRICA, AS WELL AS INFORMAL PIECE OF PAPER CONTAINING THE FIVE ELEMENTS OF US PRINCIPLES (PARA 2, REFTEL). I THEN MADE ORAL PRESENTATION BASED ON PARAS 3, 4, AND 5 REFTEL.

2. DENG PREFACED HIS REPLY BY EXPRESSING FEAR THAT THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS IN ETHIOPIA MIGHT WELL BE OUT OF ETHIOPIAN HANDS. HE SAID SUDANGOV WAS TRYING TO REACTIVATE ITS INITIATIVE FOR PEACE IN THE HORN. SUDAN'S EFFORTS HAD AN OAU POLITICAL BASE, I.E. THE AGREEMENT REACHED BEFORE THE OAU AD HOC COMMITTEE AT FREETOWN. THIS AGREEMENT COVERED NOT ONLY THE NORMALIZATION OF ETHIOPIAN-SUDANESE RELATIONS BUT ALSO PLEDGED THE TWO PARTIES TO WORK TOGETHER TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEMS WHICH THREATENED PEACE IN THE AREA (DENG INTERPOSED THAT PARTIES AT FREETOWN HAD HAD ERITREA

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PRIMARILY IN MIND, BUT THAT THE OGADEN HAD ALSO BEEN MENTIONED). THE PARTIES AT FREETOWN ALSO CONDEMNED FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN THE AREA.

3. DENG SAID US PRINCIPLES WERE ALMOST IDENTICAL WITH SUDANGOV'S THINKING AND THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM IN OUR WORKING TOGETHER. IN FACT PRESIDENT NIMEIRI HAD ALREADY

PROPOSED A SIMILAR SET OF PRINCIPLES TO SIAD BARRE AND SUDANESE BELIEVED SIAD COULD BE PERSUADED TO ACCEPT THEM.

4. DENG EXPRESSED HOPE THAT ETHIOPIANS WOULD ALSO BE RESPONSIVE. THE BEST WAY TO REMOVE FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT FROM THE CONTINENT WAS FOR AFRICANS TO SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS AND NOT LEAVE THEM TO BIG POWERS. DENG SAID HE COULD UNDERSTAND ETHIOPIA'S MOTIVATION IN SEEKING SOVIET AND CUBAN AID. HE COULD NOT, HOWEVER, CONDONE ETHIOPIA'S ACTION SINCE THIS CONFLICTED DIRECTLY WITH THE OAU POSITION.

5. SUDANGOV HAD PROPOSED TO ETHIOPIANS THAT SUDANESE DEL HEADED BY FIRST VP ABUL QASSIM VISIT ETHIOPIA TO FOLLOW UP BEGINNINGS MADE AT FREETOWN. ETHIOPIANS HAD FIRST WELCOMED THE VISIT WITHOUT QUALIFICATION. THEY HAD SUBSEQUENTLY, HOWEVER, SAID THEY WOULD LET SUDANESE KNOW ABOUT AN APPROPRIATE DATE AND AT THE SAME TIME RAISED QUESTION OF ERITREAN AND EDU BROADCASTS OVER RADIO OMDURMAN AS POSING OBSTACLES TO SUCH A VISIT. DENG SAID SUDANGOV WAS LOOKING INTO OMDURMAN BROADCASTS TO SEE IF THEY "COULD BE HANDLED IN A MORE CONSTRUCTIVE WAY." BUT DENG FEARED DECISION HAD ALREADY BEEN TAKEN OUT OF ETHIOPIAN HANDS. HE HAD HEARD FROM AN EXCELLENT SOURCE THAT SOVIETS AND CUBANS HAD BOTH EXPRESSED CONCERN TO ETHIOPIANS OVER RESULTS OF FREETOWN MEETING. DENG COMMENTED THAT SOVIETS WERE DAILY BECOMING MORE ARROGANT AND ETHIOPIANS WERE IMBIBING SAME ARROGANCE.

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6. DENG SAID AFRICAN OPINION, WHILE ORIGINALLY SYMPATHETIC TO ETHIOPIANS COULD NOT BE SYMPATHETIC TO SOVIET PRESENCE AND ACTIONS THERE. HOWEVER, SOVIETS WERE UNSCRUPULOUSLY DISREGARDING AFRICAN OPINION. SOVIETS SEEMED TO BE ACTING ON ASSURANCE THAT WESTERN POSITION WAS AT BEST CAUTIOUS. AT WORST, SOVIETS MIGHT FEEL THAT THEY HAVE BEEN ASSURED THAT WEST WOULD NOT REACT.

7. DENG SAID HE COULD OFFER SUDANGOV'S SUPPORT AND COOPERATION BUT SUDAN'S MOBILITY WAS IMPAIRED. THE SOVIETS WERE AGAINST THE SUDAN AND AGAINST PEACE IN THE HORN. HE HOPED FORMULA COULD BE FOUND WHEREBY SOVIETS AND ETHIOPIANS COULD BE MADE TO BELIEVE THAT THEY WOULD CONFRONT A FORMIDABLE U.S. FORCE SHOULD THEY VENTURE ACROSS THE BORDER INTO SOMALIA. IF IT WERE MADE CLEAR THAT THIS POWER EXISTED AND WOULD BE USED, THIS WOULD DETER THE SOVIETS. SHORT OF THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO SEE WHAT THE OAU COULD DO. SUDANGOV WOULD CONTINUE TO TRY TO GENERATE OAU ACTION, BUT DENG FELT THAT THE LARGEST SHARE WAS NOW OUT OF AFRICAN HANDS AND IN THE HANDS OF THE US AND THE WEST.

8. DENG ALSO SAID THAT IF A UN FORCE WERE ESTABLISHED TO OVERSEE THE WITHDRAWALS FROM THE OGADEN AND TO PROTECT THE LOCAL INHABITANTS THERE, SUDAN WOULD BE PLEASED TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH A FORCE.

9. DEPARTMENT REPEAT OTHER ADDRESSEES AS DESIRED.
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